



[Main page](#)
[Recent changes](#)
[Random page](#)
[Help about MediaWiki](#)

Tools

[What links here](#)
[Related changes](#)
[Special pages](#)
[Printable version](#)
[Permanent link](#)
[Page information](#)
[Cite this page](#)
[Expand all](#)

Not logged in [Talk](#) [Contributions](#) [Create account](#) [Log in](#)

Page

Discussion

Read

[Edit](#)

[Edit source](#)

[View history](#)

Search 2d4chan

Ptolus



Ptolus: City by The Spire is a 3rd party [Dungeons & Dragons 3rd Edition](#) setting, released by Malhavoc Press. This was the setting for [Monte Cook](#)'s home games and, thereby, how a lot of 3e got tested. Has been updated to [fifth edition](#) as well as the [Cypher System](#).

Contents [\[hide\]](#)

- [1 Setting in a nutshell](#)
- [2 Races of Ptolus](#)
- [3 Organizations of Ptolus](#)
- [4 Religion in Ptolus](#)

Setting in a nutshell [\[edit | edit source \]](#)

The world is called



The lands of the empire. Ptolus is a bit towards the upper left from the center.

Praemal. It was created by Praemus and its purpose was to act as a prison for [The Galchutt](#), who are basically the [Chaos Gods](#) and their [minions](#), so they couldn't go around corrupting and destroying worlds. Because of this people can't access any of the planes other than the [Ethereal Plane](#), and anything you might summon from

other planes is going to most likely be very angry at you once it realizes it's trapped here.

Ptolus' location lies at the edges of the empire Tarsis, currently crumbling.

The city was built around the eponymous Spire, a clear beacon for the party to explore and climb. Go up for long enough and you eventually reach the former fortress Goth Gulgamel of the local equivalent of **Saruman**, Ghul. Above that is the legendary ruin Jabel Shammar, the one way for PCs to become gods! - in the sense Hittite kings became gods, that is by dying gruesomely. Seriously, you can't get there from here.

(As far as you know.)

Go down you find the city sewers, the lost, and sealed, city of Dwarvenhearth, and finally the cities of the dark elves (no **Lolth**, so no **drow**). The **Banewarrens** burrow into the Spire's side.

Races of Ptolus [\[edit \]](#) [edit source \]](#)

- **Aasimar**: They exist here, but relegated to being **NPCs**.
- **Centaurs**: Also called *Aram*. Originally plains-dwelling nomads, they've started settling down in Ptolus. Hate having to sit still for long periods.
- **Dwarves**: Divided to two, actually three but the last ones gone, overclans
 - *Grailwarden*: Found an artifact called the *White Grail*, and declared themselves its stewards. More proper than Stonelost and focused on engineering, mechanics, and alchemy.
 - *Stonelost*: Your standard dwarves. Descendants of Overclan Stonemight, they lost their fabled city and now have spread out across Tarsis.
- **Elves**: Largely your standard elves, except they don't have a trance they enter, so they sleep like other races. That **Eldar** meme is present; see Urthon Aedar below.
 - *Cherubim elves*: Winged elves, self-absorbed and timid, and like actual birds have frail bones, manifesting as a -4 to **constitution**. Largely hang around in their mountain homeland of Cherubar.
 - *Dark elves*: Your drow-equivalent. Originally shoal elves that got corrupted by a minion of the Galchutt. Born with a corruption that they can overcome, but they almost never do because of their culture. Relegated to NPCs, as being a dark elf in Ptolus is illegal.
 - *Harrow elves*: Corrupted descendants of shoal and elder elves, created by ~~Sauron~~**Saruman** Ghul. Tend to have horrible looking birthmarks, scars, and/or deformities, and a lifespan close to that of humans due to the corruption in them. Nobody really likes them.
 - *Shoal elves*: The most common elves, usually when talking about elves they refer to these. Love the sea, ships, and sailing.
- **Gnomes**: Distant descendants of elves, often confused with halflings. Love songs and magic.

- **Half-elves & Half-orcs:** Rare, but they exist. Half-elves are always half-shoal elf, and half-orcs are always half-Ornu-Nom orcs.
- **Halflings:** Also distant descendants of elves. Split into various tribal caravans.
- **Humans:** Your standard fare, youngest of races, most prevalent, etc.
- **Litorians:** **Lionfolk** with the whole "noble savage"-thing going on. Get along well with halflings.
- **Lizardfolk:** Also called *Assarai*. Most think they're thieves, liars, and/or lazy, but they are just satisfied with having the bare necessities to live.
- **Minotaurs:** Vary from your standard D&D minotaur to the civilized outcasts, though still savage to most. Relegated to NPCs.
- **Orcs:** Divided to three clans, all relegated to NPCs.
 - *Ornu-Nom (Howling axe):* Most common orcs. Untouched by Ghul, and also have the "noble savage"-thing going on, but still largely like most D&D orcs.
 - *Sorn-Ulth (Bleeding breath):* First of the tribes created by Ghul. Smaller and dark-skinned, with a specialization in stealth and evil magic.
 - *Toruk-Rul (Closing fist):* The other tribe created by Ghul. Large, ferocious, and savage. Exactly what most think when they hear "orc".
- **Tieflings:** Much like the aasimar above, relegated to NPCs.

Organizations of Ptolus [\[edit | edit source \]](#)

The city of Ptolus is home to a large variety of groups, guilds, and orders with a complicated web of relationships between them, that act as either allies or enemies to the **PCs**. The important powers among them are:

- **Balacazar Crime Family:** The oldest and most powerful crime family in the city. Tend to be subtle and finance criminal enterprises, with a recent move towards magical contraband.
- **Brides of Magic:** An all-female group of **sorcerers** devoted to magic, seeing it as a force that nurtures and promotes life. Believe something big is coming that will change or destroy magic as they know it and are preparing for it.
- **Brotherhood of Redemption:** **Most controversial of organizations**. They believe that all life is innately good and sacred, and, instead of killing evil beings, they capture them and magically brainwash them to become good.
- **Dark Leaf:** Elven mercenaries who work for criminal groups to ensure other elves in the city are relatively safe from crime.
- **Delver's Guild:** The local adventurer's guild dedicated to mapping and exploring all the areas underneath the city. Maintain a series of waystations under the city and offer retrieval insurance to high-ranked members, meaning if they die while exploring, their remains will be retrieved and raised if possible.
- **The Fallen:** The Demons and other evil outsiders trapped in Praemal. Divided between those wanting ally with **The Galchutt**, those loyal to their leader *Raguel*, and those wanting to go their own way.
- **Fate Weavers:** Fortune tellers seeking to guide people to the right path, being able to see how someone's fate will affect the fate of others.

- **The Forsaken:** People fascinated with death and undeath, valuing it more than life, leading to a high suicide rate. Members belong to one of two groups: the Torrens, who hate life and relish in wanton destruction and murder, or the Licheloved, who seek the esoteric knowledge of death and undeath. Most members worship gods of death and try to become undead themselves.
- **The Guilds:** The guilds of the professions (leatherworkers, bankers, brewers, etc.) in the city. Delver's Guild, Longfingers Guild, Order of Iron Might, the Sorn, and the Vai are also included in their ranks.
- **The Inverted Pyramid:** The secretive mage's guild, dedicated to the study and preservation of magical knowledge and comprised of some of the most powerful arcane spellcasters in the world.
 - **Dreaming Apothecary:** A group of spellcasters who make magic items to order, and the big moneymaker for the Inverted Pyramid.
- **Keepers of the Veil:** An order of [paladins](#) dedicated to the destruction of undead, especially immaterial ones.
- **Killraven Crime League:** A young criminal organization seeking to overthrow not only the Balacazars, but also the Inverted Pyramid and the Vai. Surprisingly is actually succeeding at this.
- **Knights of the Chord:** An order of [bards](#) dedicated to protecting the innocent and upholding freedom; taking that eponymous prestige-class from [Eldritch Might](#).
- **Knights of the Golden Cross:** An ancient order dedicated to opposing evil in all of its forms. Prefer to keep a low profile and carefully pick their fights and goals.
- **Knights of the Pale:** A knightly order dedicated to fighting supernatural threats, with focus on combatting evil spellcasters and demons.
- **Knights of Shadow:** Middle class people seeking to create a world where people act a certain way and everyone is prosperous, and certain others more prosperous. Divided between the Knights of Enlightenment, who want to overthrow the Commissar and all temporal aspects of the Empire of Tarsis, and the Knights of the Secret Sun, who support the empire.
- **Longfingers Guild:** The old-fashioned thieves guild turned school for thieves and burglars. Their leader teaches the old philosophy of honor among thieves, and looks back on the days before the Balacazars and the Killraven had all the power.
- **The Malkuth:** Angels and other good outsiders trapped in Praemal, and their descendants, who seek to combat evil in all of its forms. Tend to be drawn to Ptolus as it has the largest concentration of evil in the world.
- **Naltegro Shuun:** The non-evil [assassins](#) and thugs for hire. Go after targets if their client provides evidence that the target deserves what they want happening to them. If the client fools them, they will enact a just punishment upon him.
- **Noble Houses of Ptolus:** The local nobles of Ptolus. Not recognized as official nobles by the Empire, but distance and tradition has kept them in power.
 - **House Abanar:** The mercantile house. Also the largest and wealthiest as anyone can purchase a title and a position in their hierarchy for 10,000 gold.

- **House Dallimothan:** The [draconic](#) house. Their members are either [Half-Dragons](#) or dragons in human form.
- **House Erthuo:** The scholar house. Mainly comprised of half-elves, they have some of the biggest collections of rare books, antiquities, and ancient artefacts.
- **House Kath:** The arts & culture house. Most famous of the houses, they act as patrons of arts and culture in the city.
- **House Khatru:** The martial house. Arrogant and self-righteous, they hate anyone who isn't a plate mail clad [fighter](#) and long for the good old days, when they could hunt down arcane spellcasters.
- **House Nagel:** The good noble house. Work to better the conditions of workers and help the needy. Currently in dire straits as their patriarch has been falsely imprisoned.
- **House Rau:** The criminal house. Pirates turned nobles, they act as sponsors for criminal ventures and find work criminal in exchange for a cut of the profits.
- **House Sadar:** The magic house. Persecuted when arcane spellcasters were hunted down, they survived just barely thanks to a mysterious stranger giving them a powerful magic staff. Members have a talent for magic involving shadows, leading to the nickname *House of Shadows*.
- **House Shever:** The technology house. Youngest of the noble houses, their influence and power is fading along with technological knowledge in the land.
- **House Vladaam:** The evil noble house. Oldest of the houses, they were founded by one of the *Vested of the Galchutt*, Vladaam. Decadent and corrupt, they have connection to all other evil factions in the city and beyond.
- **Order of Iron Might:** The local fighter's guild, dedicated to finding employment for its members .
- **Pactlords of the Quaam:** Intelligent nonhumanoids dedicated to the eradication of humans, elves, dwarves, halflings, and gnomes. Yes, this is nakedly artificial and stupid. But it's how those old 1970s-era TSR monsters got tested for 3e.
- **Pale Dogs:** The biggest gang in the Warrens, the slums, of Ptolus. Their leader, *Jirraith*, works for the Balacazars and most members eventually join them as guards and enforcers, with the most bloodthirsty being sold to the Vai.
- **The Shuul:** A young group dedicated to restoring the rule of reason and technology in the empire, and preserving what technical knowledge remains. They own one of the biggest stockpiles of firearms and gunpowder in Ptolus.
- **Sisterhood of Silence:** An all-female [monk](#) order, dedicated to capturing criminals and bringing them to the proper authorities, and protecting the peace.
- **The Sorn:** Small, independent cells of sorcerers and [wizards](#) for hire, often acting as spies, assassins, and enforcers.
- **Soul Riders:** People with the ability to leave their bodies and "ride" the souls of other people. A dozen of them live in Ptolus as wandering souls, seeking to have the city secede from the empire and then rule over the city-state through their puppets.

- **Urthon Aedar:** The last of the Elder Elves, precursors to the other elven races, seeking to restore the city of Dreta Phantas and promote the well-being of elves and their allies. Most know of them as armor-clad figures who, upon completing some inexplicable task, disappear.
- **The Vai:** A death worshipping cult turned assassin's guild. Its members try to kill a living being of some sort every day, and at least one intelligent one every month.
- **Viridian Lords:** [Rangers](#) and [barbarians](#) of Palastan, rarely found in Ptolus. The members are easily recognized from the plant life that's magically grafted to their flesh.

Religion in Ptolus [\[edit \]](#) [\[edit source \]](#)

Religion in Ptolus can be divided to two categories. You have church of [Lothian](#), and then you have the churches of all the other gods.

Lothian is, to loan a term from our [frenemies](#), a [Crystal Dragon Jesus](#) and his church is the roman catholic church. They used to have an [Inquisition](#), a lot of political power (the emperors used to be the heads of the church of Lothian, until a separate position was made for that), and most people are part of the church (in Ptolus, around 60% belong to the church, while in other lands of the empire it's around 99%).

Then you have the New Gods, as they are referred to, an ever-shifting pantheon of deities that are, intentionally, extremely specific and a little off-the-wall. The church cracked down on them when the empire was established, and only in the 200 years have they started returning to mainstream society, though this has more to do with the church losing power than people becoming more tolerant.

The [Deities](#) of Ptolus [\[Expand\]](#)

Third Party [Dungeons & Dragons Campaign Settings](#) [\[Expand\]](#)

Categories: [Ptolus Gods](#) | [Dungeons & Dragons Third Party Campaign Settings](#)
[Ptolus](#)

This page was last edited on 22 June 2023, at 15:11.

[Privacy policy](#) [About 2d4chan](#) [Disclaimers](#)

